

## Message Text

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DECEMBER 11, 1972

(ALBANY (UPI) -- GOV. NELSON. A. ROCKEFELLER ANNOUNCED TODAY HE IS RESIGNING IN A MOVE THAT MOST POLITICAL OBSERVERS VIEWED AS A PRELUDE TO A QUEST FOR THE 1976 REPUBLICAN PRESIDENTIAL NOMINATION.

THE GOVERNOR, HOWEVER, DENIED HE WAS ACTIVELY SEEKING THE PRESIDENCY. HOWEVER, HE LEFT DANGLING ANY DECISION ON SEEKING THE GOP NOMINATION BY SAYING IT WOULD BE LATE 1975-BEFORE HE MADE UP HIS MIND.

ROCKEFELLER SAID HE WILL STEP DOWN DEC. 18 AND LT. GOV. MALCOLM WILSON WOULD BE SWORN IN THE SAME DAY.

ROCKEFELLER, JUST 20 DAYS SHORT OF COMPLETING 15 YEARS IN OFFICE AS CHIEF EXECUTIVE OF ONE OF THE NATION'S LARGEST

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STATES, MADE THE RESIGNATION ANNOUNCEMENT AT A PACKED NEWS

CONFERENCE IN THE ORNATE RED ROOM OF THE CAPITOL.

HE SAID HIS RESIGNATION WOULD ALLOW HIM TO DEVOTE FULL TIME TO TWO NATIONAL COMMISSIONS AIMED AT SOLVING SOME OF THE NATION'S PRESSING PROBLEMS.

THE RESIGNATION OF THE NATION'S LONGEST TENURED AND WEALTHIEST GOVERNOR FROM THE \$85,000-A-YEAR POST HAD BEEN IN THE WIND FOR SEVERAL WEEKS.

ROCKEFELLER SAID THAT ALTHOUGH HE WAS "OPTIMISTIC ABOUT THE FUTURE," HE HAD CONCLUDED "I CAN RENDER A GREATER PUBLIC SERVICE TO THE PEOPLE OF NEW YORK AND THE NATION BY DEVOTING MYSELF TO THE WORK OF TWO BIPARTISAN NATIONAL COMMISSIONS.

THE ONE COMMISSION IS THE GROUP SET UP RECENTLY BY ROCKEFELLER ON CRITICAL CHOICES FOR AMERICANS. THE SECOND GROUP, ROCKEFELLER SAID IN HIS STATEMENT, IS THE NATIONAL COMMISSION ON WATER QUALITY.

IF HE DOES SEEK THE REPUBLICAN NOMINATION IN 1976 IT WILL BE HIS FOURTH ATTEMPT. HE TRIED UNSUCCESSFULLY IN 1960, 1964 AND 1968.

THE GOVERNOR STOPPED SHORT OF BECOMING AN OPEN CANDIDATE FOR THE REPUBLICAN PRESIDENTIAL NOMINATION AND CRITICIZED THOSE WHO HAVE SAID THAT HIS ACCEPTING CHAIRMANSHIP OF THE NATIONAL COMMISSION WAS MERELY A PLOY TO MAINTAIN A NATIONAL PLATFORM FOR HIS CANDIDACY.

"MY ONLY REGRET IN UNDERTAKING THESE TASKS IS THAT IT HAS BEEN INTERPRETED AS A POLITICAL MANEUVER TO SEEK THE PRESIDENCY," ROCKEFELLER SAID. "I'M NOT A CANDIDATE FOR THE PRESIDENCY OR ANY OTHER OFFICE."

BUT THE GOVERNOR SAID THE QUESTION OF WHETHER HE WOULD BECOME A CANDIDATE IN THE FUTURE WAS AN OPEN QUESTION.  
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"I'M KEEPING MY OPTIONS OPEN," HE SAID, ADDING, "UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES WOULD I CONSIDER SUCH A MOVE UNTIL THE LATTER PART OF 1975."

ROCKEFELLER PRAISED WILSON, SAID HE WAS UNIQUELY QUALIFIED TO FILL OUT THE GOVERNOR'S TERM IN OFFICE.

"I COULD NOT STEP ASIDE EXCEPT FOR MY UNQUESTIONED CONFIDENCE IN MALCOLM WILSON," ROCKEFELLER SAID. "HIS IN-

TEGRITY, JUDGEMENT AND QUALITIES OF LEADERSHIP AND HIS ABILITY-TO LEAD THE STATE ARE BEYOND QUESTION." (END TEXT). RUSH

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